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ABSTRACT

The view of professionalism as a social strategy differs from conventional theories of professions that consider professionalism as an evolutionary trend. This paper considers the professionalization of progress and educational expertise among teacher educators and other education reformers in Iceland in the 1980s and 1990s. It focuses on the "fagvitund" (translated as "occupational consciousness" or "professional identity") campaign, launched in the mid-1980s and designed to increase respect for teachers in Iceland. The paper uses a conceptual framework that interprets educational reform as a social strategy of epistemic individuals; examines the context in which "fagvitund" took place; considers to what extent the discourse of professionalism has merely occupied the space (field) wherein education reformers work; and compares the interpretation of professionalism as a social strategy with other contemporary interpretations of professionalism. (IAH)

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Professionalization of progress and expertise among teacher educators in Iceland

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Introduction

This paper considers the professionalization of progress and educational expertise among teacher educators and other education reformers in Iceland in the 1980s and 1990s. It focuses on the so-called *fagvitund*¹⁾ campaign, launched in the mid-1980s, toward increasing the respect for teachers in Iceland. The paper draws upon research of the discourse of educational reform in Iceland in the last 25 years (Ingólfur Á. Jóhannesson 1991a). In this research, I utilize a conceptual framework attributed to the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu to interpret the reform discourse as a social field wherein epistemic individuals are connected to historically and socially constructed legitimating principles.²⁾ The paper unfolds as follows.

First, I explain how I use the Bourdieuean framework to interpret the educational reform, at first directed at curriculum development but later at teacher professionalism as well, as a social strategy of epistemic individuals. In short, within the (intermediate) field of educational reform, the idea of professionalism has got tied to a group of individuals with particular characteristics (e.g., non-traditional education, often rural origin, many females, relatively young, being of second or third generation of educators) and special types of careers (such as teaching in progressive and open schools, experience in curriculum development work, career as principals, and so forth). In this space they have employed democratic, child-centered, and scientist discursive themes to contrast them with what they often characterized as the non-democratic and pre-scientific pre-reform tradition in education.

Second, I focus on the context in which the *fagvitund* campaign took place. In the early mid-1980s, after disappointing moments in the implementation of new curriculum materials and at a time when a strike that teachers and other state and municipal employees participated in had not given the hoped-for results, the leaders of the educational reform and teacher leaders joined in the struggle for better education under the rubric of teacher professionalism. In brief, I argue that the *fagvitund* campaign was important in reframing the educational discourse; the primary issues that were debated, such as child-centered perspectives, developmental psychology, and scientific curriculum theory, were reform issues. This gave the reform discourse more legitimacy.

Third, I consider to what extent the discourse of professionalism has merely occupied the space (field) wherein education reformers work. I argue that those who have become "professionalized" are first and foremost teacher educators, curriculum development "professionals," and teacher leaders. Thus the curriculum reform in the 1970s and the *fagvitund* campaign in the 1980s have created what I call the social field of educational reform with its own hierarchy of values (a legitimating

principle) over which the struggles in the 1990s take place.

Fourth, I compare the interpretation of professionalism as a social strategy with other contemporary interpretations of professionalism. The most productive theories of professions and professionalism link the phenomena with the production of knowledge and "learned discourse" around this knowledge. I argue that such learned discourse became the social strategy of Icelandic education reformers and teacher educators in the 1980s.

Professionalism as a social strategy

The interpretation of the discourse on educational reform in Iceland in the last 25 years as a social strategy rests in a structural point of view; the sites that the discourse reaches to are seen as a social field where epistemic individuals struggle over values. These values are derived from historically and socially constructed legitimating principles that structure what counts as capital³⁾ in the field, and the epistemic individual is an historically "constructed individual ... defined by a finite set of explicitly defined properties which differ through a series of identifiable differences from the set of properties ... which characterize other individuals ..." (Bourdieu 1988, 22).

I view the people involved in the fagvitund campaign in the 1980s and 1990s -- curriculum developers, teacher educators, teacher leaders, educational theorists, and so on -- as epistemic individuals. These people, which I label "reformers," employed the beliefs in progress, science, and the power of schooling to improve society, central to the discourse of the reform, as social strategies; they capitalized on these beliefs. These strategies and social networks in institutional sites are instrumental in the formation of the reform field as a special social field in Iceland in the last 25 years. (For a discussion of the concept of social field, see, e.g., Bourdieu 1975, 1985a, 1985b, 1988, 1990a, 1990b; see also Ingólfur Á. Jóhannesson 1991a, chapter 2).

Bourdieu's notion of a social strategy is a key concept to the interpretation of the fagvitund campaign in this paper. For Bourdieu, a strategy is the product of practical sense for a particular social game (e.g., Bourdieu 1986b). In this view, strategies may be consciously (deliberately) planned but they are also the unconscious (non-socially conscious) adaptation to the infinitely varied, objectively orchestrated field whose trajectory is also structured by the strategies employed by individuals, groups, and institutions in the field. In short, the beliefs in progress, science, and the power of schooling to improve society have an impact on reformers through their practical sense.

Social strategies are always specific to the field in which they are employed. The field of reform is an ambiguous and intermediate field. It

occupies an ambiguous position in the field of academia, and it is a vulnerable social field among other fields in society. Bourdieu discusses the distinctiveness of intermediate positions in the social space. He argues that

[w]hile it is true that the principles of differentiation which are objectively the most powerful, like economic and cultural capital, produce clear-cut differences between agents situated at extreme ends of the distributions, they are evidently less effective in the intermediate zones of the space in question. It is in these intermediate or middle positions of the social space that the indeterminacy and the fuzziness of the relationship between practices and positions are the greatest, and that the room left open for symbolic strategies to jam this relationship is the largest (1987, 12).

I have investigated the education and career of a group of between three and four hundred individuals who have worked for various institutions involved in the educational reform in Iceland. The largest of these groups, around 160 people, worked for Skólarannsóknadeild, the flagship of the educational reforms in the 1970s and 1980s in Iceland.⁴⁾ The data shows that very few individuals with conventional academic education worked for Skólarannsóknadeild, and most of them only as advisors in specific tasks. Many Skólarannsóknadeild reformers, formerly elementary school teachers, have achieved education in educational theory during their work for Skólarannsóknadeild or later, and many Skólarannsóknadeild reformers had a teaching career in progressive schools. Skólarannsóknadeild also gave many women career opportunities in textbook writing and administration. Many of the individuals in the leadership of the elementary school teachers' union, the Teacher Union of Iceland (hereafter I use the Icelandic abbreviation, i.e., KÍ), in particular those individuals responsible for writing their school policy (**Skólustefna** 1990/1987, see below), are or have been teachers in open schools or other progressive schools. It is also worth noting that the majority in the group I identified as the leadership of KÍ are women. On the faculty of the College of Education are more individuals with conventional academic education than in the group that worked for Skólarannsóknadeild. However, almost one third of its 60 people academic faculty are people who have been associated with Skólarannsóknadeild, and about half of the faculty are women. The College of Education, with its primary focus on educating teachers, differs from other academic institutions in that that educational theory, such as educational psychology, pedagogy, and curriculum theory, has more value there than such theories have in other academic sites, although this value is not uncontested. In fact, the College has taken over the academic side of the Skólarannsóknadeild work, while KÍ has taken over the political function of the Skólarannsóknadeild work. (For a detailed report of

the faculty, see Ingólfur Á. Jóhannesson 1991a, chapter 6.1.)

In the field of reform, these "ambiguous" people have had a good chance to employ "non-traditional" social strategies; the "rules of the game" had not been determined in advance by the rules of other more conventional games. Indeed it has been reported that non-traditional work habits were adopted in the reform institutions. Wolfgang Edelstein, a leading figure in the curriculum reform and an advisor to Skólarannsóknadeild, points out that the Skólarannsóknadeild staff members "were not much bound of work habits and rules; rather, they could sway their work process and methods as they wanted" (1988/1981, 103-4). If this is true, it is in part due to the ambiguity related to the fact that many teachers with little academic capital were hired to work on curriculum development and textbook writing but also due to the indeterminacy of the discursive themes (e.g., child-centered arguments, mixed ability grouping, open schools, process evaluation, integration of subjects, developmental psychology, and activity pedagogy) that the Skólarannsóknadeild reformers were exposed to. Skólarannsóknadeild was, therefore, on the margin of the intellectual and academic landscape as it has been constructed by the elites in the country, as well as Skólarannsóknadeild was an outsider in the state bureaucracy. In short, the "profession" of education reformers was ill-defined and unstructured, and it had much room for a "creative redefinition" (Bourdieu 1979, 87).

How to increase "fagvitund:" The campaign for teacher professionalism in the mid-1980s

A campaign for increasing the respect for teachers and teachers' work, among the public and among teachers themselves, was launched in the early mid-1980s in Iceland. In addition to arguments simply demanding higher salary, the proponents of teacher professionalism put forward arguments based on child-centered and progressive themes (e.g., Heimir Pálsson, Svanhildur Kaaber et al. 1986). They also put forward arguments based on the notion of scientific expertise in educational theory (e.g., Edelstein 1985).

The societal context

The demands for higher salary were triggered by vulnerability in terms of income and lifestyle, and, typically, these demands were linked to the issue of respect for teachers. Gunnlaugur Ástgeirsson (1984, 3) has summarized "areas of concern" which, according to him, were salary, status, respect, and evaluation of teachers' work. These concerns underline the conviction that teachers are underpaid and, consequently, disrespected compared with professionals in the private sector and that teachers' status

has fallen from what it used to be. Teachers pointed out that they cannot go into the private sector to find better-paid jobs without giving up teaching. It was frequently argued that teachers could not teach well because of too much overtime work that they performed to survive economically (e.g., Wincle Jchannsdóttir 1985, Arthúr Björgvin Bollason 1985). In fact, approximately in the years from 1982-4, teachers -- as well as other state employees, workers, and those who normally work for fixed contract salary -- lost a considerable share of their salary when governments decided to combat inflation by "freezing" salary rates.

The change of coalition government in 1983 from a center-of-left coalition to a center-of-right coalition signifies a shift toward conservatism and deregulation in the Western world. The new government toughened the already-begun salary freeze; it deregulated various kinds of business and industry, such as import, wholesale, and retail business; and it discontinued state monopoly on radio and television broadcasting. By these moves, the government contributed to growing individualism and materialism in the country. This individualism appears, for instance, in an interest in "free-lance" professionalism. In order to become one's own boss, journalists founded their own magazines, psychologists sought to be self-employed, and so forth. These pressures were felt by educators who, as I noted, had little possibility of doing both, being self-employed and staying in the occupation.

The yuppie-style -- a 1980s version of an ideology around professionals and entrepreneurs -- also had an impact on teachers' perception of their social conditions. This lifestyle, at least in the Icelandic context, is related to an interest among artists and cultural figures in Reykjavík in renovating old houses, eating in the ultra-expensive restaurants in Iceland, wearing clothes made of natural fabrics -- in short, "showing off." Novelist Gudbergur Bergsson (1986, 286) splendidly explains how the "team of cuties" (*sæta lidid*), which he claims that does not have any politics or ideology, contends to be searching for a "firm core" behind the horrible wall-paper from the time when the working class was rising from poverty: "Undir öllu draslinu var skinandi panill" (underneath all the junk was shining panelling). These fashion trends affected teachers as well as nurses and other health professionals (groups working for the state on fixed contract salary and largely consisting of women). Teachers' and nurses' education equips them with the dispositions to enjoy panelling, French-cuisine restaurants, and nice dresses, but they felt vulnerable under the immediate material pressures of establishing a lifestyle comparable with that of former school mates with much higher income.

The strike of state and municipal employees in October 1984, including most elementary school teachers, and the mass resignations of secondary school teachers, equal to a strike, that took effect on March 1, 1985 caused an uproar among teachers (e.g., Heimir Pálsson 1985). Traditionally, state and municipal employees in Iceland have not had the right to strike or even

to bargain. In 1976, the Federation of State and Municipal Employees (BSRB), won limited rights to strike. The union that most elementary school teachers are members in, the Teacher Union of Iceland (KÍ), belonged to BSRB, and many of its members felt that they had been "used" in the 1984 strike without gaining their share. The union that most secondary school teachers are members in, The Icelandic Teacher Association (HÍK), belonged to another organization (the Federation of University Educated People, BHM) that had even more limited bargaining rights and not the right to go on strike.

The impact of these strikes is not limited to bargaining issues. Teacher leaders felt that teacher professionalism would need to be secured by legal and academic means. Consequently, KÍ and HÍK launched a campaign for a legislation concerning licensing of teachers and protection of the use of occupational titles. This campaign is often referred to as the campaign for "logverndun" (job protection by law). After debates and considerable lobby efforts on the behalf of the Federation of Teacher Associations (BK), which consists of KÍ and HÍK, and others, the Parliament passed the Teacher License Act in the spring of 1986 (Log um logverndun ... 1986). In addition to a diploma from a teacher education institution, the act requires an authorization on the behalf of the Ministry of Culture and Education for a person to use the title "elementary school teacher" (grunnskólakennari) or "secondary school teacher" (framhaldsskólakennari). Job applications of individuals without a certificate and a license, when recommended by principals and school boards, must now be reviewed by a committee that includes representatives from the Ministry of Culture and Education, a teacher education institution and a teacher union. Unlicensed individuals are now called "instructors" (leikbeinendur) instead of teachers and receive somewhat lower salary.

The fagvitund campaign was also greatly affected by the vicious debate over the new elementary school social studies curriculum that Skólarannsóknadeild had prepared. This debate, beginning in November 1983, was characterized by attacks on the political and epistemological bases of the social studies curriculum and textbooks; the arguments of the opponents ranged from distortions of what would be covered in future textbooks to accusations of a communist conspiracy in the curriculum to a debate over the role of facts in history teaching (e.g., Edelstein 1987, Thorsteinn Gunnarsson 1990; see also Ingólfur Á. Jóhannesson 1991a, chapter 7.2). This debate ended -- if indeed it has ended -- in the resignation of the team of people who developed the social studies curriculum in June 1984.

This debate finally persuaded many reformers that they must turn directly to teachers to promote their way of thinking (i.e., child-centered, scientist activity pedagogy), not only and not even primarily through government institutions, such as Skólarannsóknadeild (see, e.g., Ingvar Sigurgeirsson 1983, 393). Many leading reformers had already left or were on the verge of leaving Skólarannsóknadeild. They went to work in the

College of Education and other sites. They also lined up with the leadership of the Teacher Union of Iceland (KÍ) in order to shift the emphasis from a defense to a promotion of their beliefs. For instance, many former social studies team members participated in the preparation of the school policy of KÍ (*Skólastefna* 1990/1987), which was begun in 1984. The writing of the school policy, although not in focus here, is central to the campaign to increase professional consciousness, or *fagvitund* as it was called in Iceland (see endnote 1), in the group of teachers. About 2000 teachers and many others discussed the document before its first publication in 1987. (For a discussion of *Skólastefna* and the process of writing the document, see Ingólfur Á. Jóhannesson 1991a, chapter 4.2.)

The arguments

Many of the major arguments in the *fagvitund* campaign appear in speeches and proceedings from a conference on teacher education, held in April 1986 (Ólafur H. Johannsson 1986). Among the arguments at this conference are child-centered arguments, arguments that stress *fagvitund*, and progressive political arguments.

An important part of the rhetoric in the professionalism campaign was to state that improving the quality of teaching is vital for children (see "Fagvitund kennara" 1986). This was articulated in a group discussion at the April 1986 conference. The group discussed six criteria for "professional school practice" (*faglegt skólustarf*). These criteria address students' cognitive as well as emotional needs, the relationship between students and the teacher, and the teacher's ability to motivate students' learning. According to these criteria, the teacher should emphasize the relationship between what is learned and why it is learned (39), the teacher should facilitate students' access to resources and materials (40), and the teacher should be sensitive toward students' emotions and personality (41).

As I have noted, the term "*fagvitund*" became a symbol for the campaign. *Fagvitund* draws attention to the belief that teachers' social struggles are not only over material resources (income) but over the goals of education. *Fagvitund* also signifies a dialectical view to the relationship between the teacher and her/his practice, put forward by, for instance, Ólafur Proppé, a former *Skólarannsóknadeild* reformer, now the assistant rector of the College of Education. Ólafur's definition of "professional school practice" contains that school practice is professional "[w]hen a teacher continues to increase her/his ability as to approach school practice by researching own practice and that of other teachers, and [when s/he] tries ideas in practice, and evaluates [the practice] in an organized fashion" ("Fagvitund kennara" 1986, 39).

One of the reformers who frequently used the term *fagvitund* was Wolfgang Edelstein. For example, he worried about the lack of knowledge in curriculum theory among secondary school teachers, in particular the lack of

knowledge of evaluation methods, as a fundamental obstacle for improving education (1988/1985). Edelstein argued that more knowledge of evaluation methods among secondary school teachers would improve the quality of secondary school teaching, and he emphasized the developmental psychology of Piaget and other scientific educational theory.

In an address, delivered by Heimir Pálsson and Svanhildur Kaaber⁵⁾ at the April 1986 conference on teacher education (Heimir Pálsson, Svanhildur Kaaber et al. 1986), they emphasized questions such as, "What kind of schools and school systems?" and, "Why schools?" (16). They argued that the role of

the school is to insure that every student will become capable of taking independent decisions, to select the direction for own life, and to change that direction when it is necessary. Besides this the school must foster student's understanding of that that [s/]he is not an island but shares the responsibility for life with everyone else (17).

Heimir and Svanhildur tied the discussion of the purposes of schooling into the demand that "[e]very single teacher must have the education that is necessary to be capable of taking a responsible position to teaching materials" (21). They continue:

The materialistic world that we live in is irresponsible. Teachers ... must not avoid the responsibility of taking a position; [they must] teach their students [methods for] discriminating between good and bad ...

Imagine that a dictator-minded government would come to power, imagine that we would be faced with ... revision of history, imagine that it would be prohibited to teach about Jon Sigurdsson [the 19th-century independence hero whose birthday, June 17, is the National Day of Iceland] -- well, or prohibited to teach about anyone else than Jón Sigurdsson. A teacher profession (stett) not able to resist such repression would be irresponsible ... And let us not say: This will never happen here! Such a response is irresponsible (21).

Heimir and Svanhildur admit that ethics and how to discriminate between good and bad might never be "taught" in schools but contend that these issues are dealt with in teacher education because teaching must always be based on discussions about ethical problems and matters of opinion. Otherwise the goal of "sovereignty [of the individual] in collective responsibility" for the world cannot be fulfilled (23).

Heimir and Svanhildur highlighted democratic and progressive discursive themes. For them, cooperation and discussion have the fundamental goal of facilitating participatory democracy. "Methods," when mentioned by them, refer to the process of participation in making decisions. They point out

that science is never more than a tool to achieve "understanding of the value of education" (Helmir Pálsson, Svanhildur Kaaber et al. 1986, 24). They argue that teachers need more than "minimum education" -- in fact, they believe that teachers really need the "surplus-education" ("umframmenntun") that is also vital for the scientist who wishes to succeed (23). Finally, they say that the teacher must somehow become an "education theorist" (menntunarfræðingur) (24).

Another political argument, often put forward in the professionalism campaign, was the lack of certified teachers in the rural and coastal areas of the country and the inequality caused by that. This is discussed, for instance, by Halldóra Jónsdóttir (1986), a teacher in Hafralækjarskóli in the North East district. She points out that while only a few of the Reykjavík teachers in the school year 1985-6 were uncertified teachers, 50 % of teachers in the West Fjords were uncertified and 25 % in the whole country. In addition, rural schools tend to suffer more from lack of adequate physical conditions. Halldóra calls for superintendents, local school boards, and principals to refuse to hire uncertified teachers. The article was written in support of the proposed Teacher License Act that she believed would help to reverse the trend.

The professionalism campaign and the Teacher License Act drew responses similar to those directed against the social studies curriculum, in most part from the same critics. Among them was Guðmundur Magnússon, an historian and journalist of the conservative **Morgunblaðið** in Reykjavík. He argued that pedagogy and curriculum theory is nonsense, at the best, and leftist subversion, at the worst. Therefore, he argued, it is important to prevent that learning such nonsense will be required for those who want to teach. Guðmundur took the example of "a highly-educated linguist that also has studied Icelandic literature" who competes for the position of teaching Icelandic in the upper grades (i.e., grades 8-10) of the elementary school with "a curriculum theorist who has learned a little bit in grammar and literature in the College of Education and been graduated from there" (1984). Guðmundur argued that it was ridiculous that the linguist wouldn't even be considered for the position except having attended pedagogy classes. Guðmundur contented that "most of these studies [in curriculum theory and pedagogy] concern untestable hypotheses ... about the psyche of individuals and the collective life of humans, and they have almost never any practical use in teaching, but may indeed be very harmful." Furthermore, the "unbelievable delusions (grillur)" "in the minds of pedagogy- and curriculum theorists" are much responsible for "what has gone wrong in schools in the country in recent years and has caused great worries for parents and other guardians of children" (1986).

Creating a space for the reform discourse

The debate over the social studies curriculum and the campaign for teacher professionalism attracted increased attention to the field of reform in relation to other fields. The intent was to defend work that had been done (i.e., the social studies curriculum) and to promote respect for teachers under the rubric of professionalism. Furthermore, the professionalism campaign was an internal campaign to promote *fagvitund* to classroom teachers. These discussions also brought the leadership of the teacher unions into the reform discourse; in the *fagvitund* campaign, for instance, there was more forceful public discussion on the behalf of teacher leaders than had been seen for a long time.

In spite of whether these tasks (defending social studies, increasing respect for teachers, increasing *fagvitund* among teachers) were successfully finished, the debates were important for the discursive "visibility" of the field; they helped to insure that the reform language got heard. This was important for the emergence of the reform hierarchy of values

[b]ecause any language that can command attention is an "authorized language," invested with the authority of a group, [and] the things it designates are not simply expressed but also authorized and legitimated. This is true not only of the establishment language but also of heretical discourses which draw their legitimacy and authority from the very groups over which they exert power and which they literally produce by expressing them: they derive their power from their capacity to **objectify** unformulated experiences, to make them public -- a step on the road to officialization and legitimation -- and when the occasion arises, to manifest and reinforce their concordance (Bourdieu 1977, 170-71).

In this sense, the debate over the social studies curriculum and the *fagvitund* campaign may have been the vital moments for the reform to be actualized as a legitimate discourse with its own legitimating principle. When critics argued that reform items were anti-patriotic, the reform gained certain power as a heretical discourse that formulated the ideas and experience of reformers. These debates were occasions for the social studies teaching strategies (e.g., inquiry methods), professionalism and other issues to be rationalized through the argument that they would improve the situation of children. As such, reformers saw the reform measures as a radical intervention into Icelandic education; they envisioned the child-centered perspectives of the reform as a "counter-discourse" (Terdiman 1985, 18) against what they characterized as the non-democratic and pre-scientific pre-reform pedagogy. This difference became a major source for the symbolic capital of the reformers.

The professionalism campaign signifies the discursive strength of the reform discourse. While the debate over the social studies curriculum was in part framed by traditional critics, relying on the pre-reform legitimating principle, the fagvitund campaign was organized by the reformers around the discursive themes of the reform. The campaign helped reformers to establish the reform hierarchy of values with themes such as mixed ability grouping, open schools, local curriculum projects, activity pedagogy, integration of subjects, developmental psychology, and teacher professionalism -- that is, the discursive themes that form the legitimating principle of the reform -- at the top. This hierarchy of values is central to the professionalization of progress and educational expertise.

The consequences of the fagvitund campaign: Professionalization of progress and educational expertise in Iceland

It has been observed that the discussion on professionalism and fagvitund in the 1980s in Iceland was much limited to teacher leaders and faculty members of institutions such as the College of Education, the National Center for Educational Materials, and the Ministry of Culture and Education (Ingólfur Á. Jóhannesson 1987, 17). What, then, is the significance of the fagvitund campaign in the formation of the social field of educational reform in Iceland in the last 25 years?

The creation of distinctions from the allegedly non-democratic, pre-scientific pre-reform pedagogical tradition in Iceland is central to the social strategies of reformers. While they, in their argumentation for reform themes, did not mean to create these distinctions for their own advantage as experts in the new conceptions, they, nevertheless, were converting educational, cultural, and social capital embodied in discursive themes and social networks into symbolic capital. When linked to the formation of a field, the discursive themes of the reform become symbolic as elements in the professionalization of progress and educational expertise. By "professionalization of progress" I mean that reformers, consciously or unconsciously, tied the goal of improving education with "science" -- because of the credibility that scientific discourse, specific to modernity, is supposed to have. This is what I refer to as the beliefs in progress, science, and the power of schooling to improve society. Professionalization, or "expertization," of the Icelandic reformers is characterized in particular by the use of "scientist arguments for democratic, child-centered concerns" ⁶⁾ -- in contrast with what they characterized as non-democratic and pre-scientific pre-reform practices.

The beliefs in progress and expertise are in part derived from a view similar to the public rhetoric of late 19th century schooling in the United States that was formed within professional communities and has been prevalent ever since. In this rhetoric, "[e]xpert knowledge, organized around

the rationalities of science, was to free people from the constraints of nature and offer paths towards a more progressive social world" (Popkewitz 1991, 39). At that historical conjuncture, progress (as evolution) was identified as a problem of science, society, and the state (as opposed to a problem of the Church), and the notions of progress and scientific rationality were linked with educational expertise through the ideology of professionalism.

The Icelandic reformers have demanded professional authority for teachers on the ground that teachers must become experts not only in the science of education but also in the goals (i.e., progress, democracy, child-centered education) that this science is supposed to facilitate. Reformers claim professional authority because of their "progress-oriented" dispositions, embodied in their practical sense, and they claim this authority because they have internalized the possibility of evolutionary progress, by the means of science, as their "collective misrecognition" (Bourdieu 1990, 68). In this sense, the professionalization of educational expertise as a specific historical phenomenon had, in the Icelandic context, to be exercised within the discourse of teacher professionalism if it was to gain credibility and become a part of the legitimating principle of the reform. Ironically, what Icelandic reformers might have a chance of succeeding in in this regard is their own professionalization, similar to the professionalization of teacher educators in the U.S. which has not resulted in the professionalization of teachers (Labaree 1991).

This is not to say that the kind of "truth" (that is, collective belief in historical progress and the science of education) underneath the field of reform has established a high degree of authority in relation to social fields other than that of educational reform. In fact, professionalization of this kind of knowledge (historical progress, the science of education) is possible only in an intermediate social space.

The field of educational reform is intermediate in many senses. First, it is an intermediate social space because it is a field without much social and economic capital. Yet this space is not previously a clearly structured space, such as the space of workers in the field of labor relations (a Bourdieuean terms for the "class struggle" between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat) where the principles of differentiation tend to be more powerful than in the field of educational reform. The reform space (i.e., the space of leadership in education) has been left open by those with the largest volumes of social and economic capital because they do not want to spend the time that it takes to convert these types of capital into capital that would count in the field of reform (e.g., a graduate degree in educational theory, a teaching career in an open school). The atmosphere of growing individualism and the teacher salary freeze in the early mid-1980s has reinforced the general tendency of those with social and economic capital not to try to acquire the intermediate-value capital specific to the field of educational reform. It is in this sense that reformers had a

relatively free play to structure the internal legitimacy of what counts in the reform field -- in spite of attacks on the social studies.

Second, the field of educational reform is intermediate in relation to most political struggles; and professionalization is only possible on the ground of presenting itself as politically neutral and morally correct. It is necessary to be able to claim professional expertise (read: neutrality), and one way of doing that is to deny direct links with politics. Seen this way, the reform is "open in both ends" (Thorsteinn Gunnarsson and Ingólfur Á. Jóhannesson 1990, 14), and the criticisms from the right (e.g., Guðmundur Magnússon, see above) and the left (e.g., Gestur Guðmundsson 1981) have in general helped the reform to maintain a distance from partizan politics (see also Ingólfur Á. Jóhannesson 1991a, chapter 5.2).

Third, the field of reform is intermediate in relation to traditional academic capital. In fact, it may appear as curriculum theory capital is much subordinate to other kinds of academic capital if we regard the larger field of academia. In the field of reform, however, curriculum theory capital is gaining credibility because of the ability of educational theorists to capitalize on themes such as progressivism and national values (Ingólfur Á. Jóhannesson 1991a, chapters 5.3 and 6.2). This is what I, following Bourdieu (1979, 87, see above) call a "creative redefinition." Seen this way, the relatively unfixed relationship between traditional academic capital and the emerging curriculum theory capital in the field of reform makes the field an ideal space for (professional) reformers to exploit the potential of pedagogy and curriculum theory as science in order to obtain more authority (social competence), yet specific authority that most likely is only valid in the field of reform.

Summary

In the (intermediate) field of reform, professionalism and educational expertise has got tied to a group of individuals that have particular physical and epistemic characteristics (e.g., non-traditional education, often rural origin, often female, relatively young, to be of second or third generation of educators) and special types of careers (e.g., in progressive and open schools, in work for Skólarannsóknadeild, as principals). This group of people, which I have labelled an "ambiguous" group, has, like any group, "produced" its own truth -- the belief in evolutionary progress and a collective "misrecognition" of scientist arguments for democratic, child-centered concerns -- which informs the strategies that are employed by them as epistemic individuals. They have been capable of exercising power to legitimize this truth to the extent that today there is a field of reform -- or, more accurately, a field of the reform discourse -- structured in accordance with its own legitimating principle.

When the beliefs in progress, science, and the power of schooling to improve society were assumptions that the work of a government

institution (i.e., Skólarannsóknadeild) was based on, there was in fact less than a need to discuss them. But when the Skólarannsóknadeild work was suspended in the mid-1980s, much of the ideas had to be articulated in a different fashion; that is, the government had terminated its support of the epistemological basis underneath the notions of progress and expert science of education. The response of the reformers was, among other strategies, to campaign for fagvitund and professionalism among teachers, to speak out more forcefully than before, and publicly, the notions of progress and science that always lay underneath the themes of the reform. This represents, so to speak, a fresh part in the trajectory of the heretical discourse toward legitimizing itself.

But in the process, the reformers masked the similarities with the pre-reform pedagogy, not only to the critics and the public but, even to a greater extent, to themselves -- that is, within the field of reform. This is the process which Bourdieu calls "officialization; "the group (or those who dominate it) teaches itself and masks from itself its own truth, binds itself by a public profession which sanctions and imposes what it utters, tacitly defining the limits of the thinkable and the unthinkable ..." (1990a, 108). Even though the intent still was to improve schools for the good of children, the reformers had, after the social studies debate, little choice but to maintain and enhance the symbolic value of the reform discourse; they have, thus far, been successful in that task as concerns the field of educational reform. These are the unplanned consequences of the fact that the reform measures were considered better for children than the pre-reform pedagogy.

On the other hand, reformers may not have the authority to exercise the truth of evolutionary progress and scientist arguments for democratic concerns in larger society, at least not compared to the power that the fields of law and medicine have reached to exercise their "truth" (Bourdieu 1988, Larson 1990). The professionalism campaign -- relatively successful in internally legitimating the reform beliefs -- failed, by and large, to achieve the goal of an "equal" status for teachers compared with the professions of law and medicine. In short, the educational and cultural capital of the reform has not become converted into social or economic capital; education reformers and teachers lack social competence compared to that of lawyers and medical doctors.

Implications of the study for the theory of professions

To view professionalism as a social strategy differs from conventional theories of professions that consider professionalism as an evolutionary trend: once an occupational group has matured enough, it becomes a "profession," and once an individual has mastered a certain stock of knowledge, s/he is professional. In this line of thought, it is necessary to establish criteria to assess the level of professionalism that a given group

has reached. These criteria include, for example, that the profession performs an essential service, that it is founded upon a systematic body of knowledge, that it requires a lengthy period of academic practical training, that it has a high degree of autonomy, that it has a code of ethics, and that it generates in-service growth (Hoyle 1980/1969, chapter 6). In this line of thought, it is also argued over if a group will be able to become a profession or not, and the concept of semi-professions (e.g., Etzioni 1969) has been constructed to account for groups that are considered unlikely to become professional because of a lack of societal power. In fact, teachers are often considered a case in point among semi-professionals.

In the theory of professions that Magali Sarfatti Larson, Randall Collins and others have developed (e.g., Larson 1977, Collins 1979, Bledstein 1976, Torstendahl and Burrage 1990), modern professionalism is seen as a socially and historically constructed ideology -- in contrast with the view that becoming professional is a natural stage in the evolution of an occupational group. According to this view, the concept of modern professionalism in the Anglo-Saxon world is a middle or upper class construct. Professionalism is seen as an ideology, a common "culture" of an occupational group that is capable of using that ideology to manipulate the access to the profession and an understanding of the professions' work. Collins (1979, 61) has observed that a formal common culture is important to the social or occupational group that seeks to become respected as professional, both to hold others away from the field and to establish a homogenous community of intellectuals. He points out that if such culture exists, ties among individuals who otherwise have little in common can be relatively quickly negotiated. Each potential group of professionals "attempted to define a total coherent system of necessary knowledge within a precise territory, to control the intrinsic relationships of their subject by making it a scholarly as well as an applied science, to root social existence in the inner needs and possibilities of documentable worldly processes" (Bledstein 1976, 88). In fact, the purpose of becoming professional in this modern sense has more to do with the social status and identification of the individuals than the quality of the profession's work. Medical doctors and lawyers have been the most successful groups in their struggle, at least if we look to the United States (Larson 1977), while other groups, such as engineers, largely failed in their struggle (Collins 1979, 159-71).

This work acknowledges professionalism as an historically specific construct that is linked to the production and certification of expert knowledge (see also Labaree 1991, Popkewitz 1991). But Larson now argues that "it is less productive to work towards a general theory of professions than it is to think of questions which go beyond the professions and address the larger and more important theme of construction and social consequences of expert knowledge" (1990, 25). It is "the production of 'learned discourse' and its implications for the professional phenomenon" (Larson 1990, 25) that the Bourdieuean interpretation of professionalism as

a social strategy sheds light on. If professionalism is a social strategy, the dispositions derived from the group's ideology are simultaneously employed on the conscious and unconscious levels. The rhetoric is used as if it were natural, and the idea of evolutionary progress is taken for granted. In the Bourdieuean framework, professionalization is seen as a "trajectory" rather than as an evolution. The concept of trajectory refers to the fact that the professionalization of a given group is unique yet it does have a logic that is only partially predictable. In this view, there are no universal criteria that determine who can become most professional and who cannot become professional.

If the trajectory of becoming professional is linked to the production of a "learned discourse," rather than seen as a successful adaption of a more-or-less natural ideology, the trajectory is linked to the knowledge in the field within which the discourse is valid. In other words, the professionalism phenomenon is linked to the question of what can count as capital. Thus, teacher educators are fully capable of "professionalizing" their knowledge, their discourse, to create capital that counts in the field of educational reform. In this view, there simply is no natural stage to reach, and any social or occupational group can become "professional" in the sense that the "expert" knowledge, the discourse of the group, can become capital in a given field. It is the relationship between the knowledge as discursive themes and location of the given field in the power network (field of power) that determines how "successful" the professionalization of a group is. That is, the knowledge, the learned discourse created by teacher educators is not by nature inferior to the knowledge, the discourse, of medical doctors or lawyers. In this sense, the "science" of teacher education may well be "professionalized;" for example, the conversion of the rhetoric of professionalism into what I call curriculum theory capital (see above) within the field of educational reform and teacher education in Iceland has benefitted the teacher educator and the "professional" reformer.

Endnotes

1) The closest translation of the term "fagvitund," a much used term to signify this campaign, is probably "occupational consciousness." Another translation that captures the significance of the term to many educationists in Iceland is "professional identity," see Ólafur J. Proppé, Sigurjón Mýrdal, and Bjarni Danielsson (in progress). The difference in meaning between "fagvitund" and "teacher professionalism," as I use these terms here, is rather vague: however, teacher professionalism refers to the general phenomenon in Western societies, while fagvitund refers to the specific campaign in Iceland. But, as often in public debates in Iceland, the international term (i.e., professionalism) is used as much or more than the Icelandic term.

2) In my research, I have identified three spectra of legitimating principles of discursive themes that operate in the social field of educational reform in Iceland. These are the reform versus the pre-reform spectrum, the reform spectrum with the technological and progressive poles, and the traditional academic capital versus the curriculum theory capital spectrum. For a discussion of the legitimating principles, see Ingólfur Á. Jóhannesson (1991a, 1991b, 1991c, 1992a, 1992b).

3) The principal types of capital are economic capital, cultural capital, and social capital, as well as symbolic capital which is the form in which the different types of capital are perceived and recognized as legitimate (Bourdieu 1985, 724). In the field of reform, it is struggled over the symbolic value of different types of reform themes (primarily progressive themes and technological themes) and pre-reform themes, as well as it is struggled over the value of curriculum theory and other educational theory as an academic endeavor (see Ingólfur Á. Jóhannesson 1991a, 1992c).

4) Skólarannsóknadeild (the Department of Educational Research and Development) was an agency within the Ministry of Culture and Education in Iceland. It began to revise and reorganize the complete elementary school (grades 1-10) curriculum in the late 1960s. This has been the largest curriculum project in the history of Icelandic education. In the end of the year 1984, when the Ministry was reorganized, the role of Skólarannsóknadeild was changed and the name terminated.

5) Helmir and Svanhildur were, respectively, the chair and the deputy chair as well as the founding chair of the Federation of Teacher Associations (BK) which had been recently established to coordinate the work of the main teacher unions; that is, the Teacher Union of Iceland (KI) and The Icelandic Teacher Association (HÍK). They wrote the address with four others, Aldís Guðmundsdóttir, a secondary school teacher at the Hamrahlíd gymnasium in Reykjavík, Hannes Isberg Ólafsson, the editor of the teacher periodical *Ný menntamal* and a teacher at Ármúlas skóli comprehensive secondary school in Reykjavík; Erla Kristjánsdóttir, a former social studies curriculum director for Skólarannsóknadeild; and Torfi Hjartarson, a College of Education student (was graduated 1986), later a textbook writer for the National Center of Educational Materials.

6) In the Skólarannsóknadeild discourse, scientist arguments were used to promote the view that democratic and child-centered perspectives are imperative to improve education and society. In fact, scientism and child-centered perspectives are often so interwoven in reform documents that identifying a theme as either democratic/child-centered or scientist is a difficult task. I name this pattern scientist arguments for democratic, child-centered concerns. In this pattern we see an "alliance" between the scientist and democratic discursive themes. This pattern seems to be based, at least in part, on the fact that the language of science has validity as an academic language and a language of modernity. In this view, scientism may be considered the means to achieve the goals defined in the Primary School Act of 1974 (Ingólfur Á. Jóhannesson 1991a, 163)

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